



1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey

Summary Report

August 1999

AARP is the nation's leading organization for people age 50 and older. It serves their needs and interests through information and education, research, advocacy, and community services which are provided by a network of local chapters and experienced volunteers throughout the country. The organization also offers members a wide range of special benefits and services, including *Modern Maturity* magazine and the monthly *Bulletin*.

Acknowledgments

AARP Research Group staff collaborated with Lee Norrgard and Adrienne Oleck of the AARP Applied Gerontology Group and Jeff Kramer of AARP Federal Affairs to conduct the 1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey. AARP Research staff who assisted in this effort include Rachelle Cummins, Jane Takeuchi, Gretchen Straw, Sharon Hermanson, and George Gaberlavage. For more information about this survey, contact Rachelle Cummins at (202) 434-6297.

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Survey Findings At A Glance

1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey

Experience with Funeral Arranging, Pre-Planning, or Both

- One in five Americans age 50 and older experienced funeral arranging, pre-planning, or both from January 1998 to June 1999.

Advanced Planning for a Funeral After Someone Died

- Twenty-nine percent of those arranging a funeral following a death found that some details of the funeral they arranged had been planned and paid for in advance.

Service or Pricing Changes

- Funeral homes changed the services and prices that had been arranged ahead of time for 10% of those who pre-planned or dealt with pre-arranged funerals.

Embalming

- In most cases in which the body was embalmed, funeral homes asked respondents for their permission to embalm. In a quarter of cases, the embalming was done without prior permission.

Shopping for Funeral Homes

- Almost seven out of ten funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners contacted one funeral home when arranging or pre-planning the funeral. Another 18% contacted two or more.

Caskets

- One in three funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners who viewed caskets did not receive a written price list for caskets before they began viewing them.
- One third (34%) of the funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners who viewed caskets were told that the protective features of the casket would help preserve the body indefinitely.
- Seven out of ten (71%) purchased (59%) or rented (12%) a casket for the funeral.

Price Information on Funeral Goods and Services

- A third (34%) of all arrangers and/or pre-planners were *not* offered price information before they started discussing specific funeral goods and services.
- *Written* price lists were *not* given up-front to a third (32%) of those who experienced funeral arranging and/or pre-planning.
- Before leaving the funeral home, one out of seven (14%) of arrangers and/or pre-planners did *not* receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services they selected.
- The individual price of the funeral goods and services was not disclosed in five percent of the written statements provided.

Experience Purchasing Burial Plots and Burial Goods and Services

- From January 1998 through June 1999, one out of twelve (8%) Americans age 50 and older purchased a burial plot for someone who died or for themselves in advance.
- One in ten (10%) Americans age 50 and older purchased burial goods and services such as a headstone, memorial, or opening and closing of a grave from January 1998 through June 1999.
- Almost a third (29%) of those purchasing a burial plot, goods or services were told that the grave liner or burial vault would help preserve the body indefinitely.

Price Information on Burial Plots and Burial Goods and Services

- Written or printed price lists were *not* given to one in three (36%) of those who purchased a burial plot.
- Seven in ten who received written or printed burial plot price lists thought they were very (50%) or somewhat (20%) helpful.
- A quarter (22%) of those who purchased other burial goods and services were *not* given a written or printed price list.
- Eight in ten who received written or printed burial goods and services price lists thought they were very (53%) or somewhat (28%) helpful.

Summary Report

Purpose

The Federal Trade Commission is revisiting the Funeral Industry Practices Trade Regulation Rule in 1999. In anticipation of this review, AARP conducted this survey on consumers' experiences with funeral and burial planning. The burial planning or arranging part of the survey is an expansion of an earlier study conducted in 1988. In the 1988 study, AARP explored consumer experiences on various matters relating to funerals and the Funeral Rule. Although the 1999 and 1988 surveys are very similar, these two studies cannot be compared data-point for data-point for a variety of reasons, primarily differences in survey population and design.¹ However, recognizing this limitation, this summary refers to the most closely related findings from 1988 while presenting the new data in 1999 to help illuminate changes that have occurred in the industry over the last decade.²

Methodology

Using TeleNation, an omnibus telephone survey, Market Facts, Inc. conducted 2,591 (weighted n = 2,624) interviews for AARP from June 18, 1999, through July 11, 1999, with adult males and females 50 years old or older.³ From this sample, 507 (weighted n = 531) personally planned for a funeral after someone died, pre-planned and paid for a funeral in advance of need for someone, including possibly themselves, or both between January 1998 and June 1999. A total of 358 (weighted n = 358) respondents purchased burial plots or burial goods and services during this same time period.

Data analysis and reporting are based on the 2,624 respondents.⁴ Based on this sample size, the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 1.9 percent.⁵ For the sub-sample of funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners (n=531), the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 4.3 percent. For the sub-sample of burial arrangers or planners (n=358), the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 5.3 percent.

In addition to the funeral and burial planning questions, the survey asked demographic questions. When possible, this summary presents statistically significant demographic differences by age, gender, education, income, and marital status.⁶ However, in most cases the respondent subsets are too small for such analysis or the minimum difference in percentage points required for statistical significance is too great.

¹ Appendix A and Appendix B to this summary contain annotated questionnaires for the 1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey and the 1988 AARP Funeral Study respectively.

² Appendix C includes a table showing a side-by-side comparison of those survey items where the question wording and the base populations are quite similar.

³ Appendix D presents a detailed methodology for the 1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey. In this appendix, there is a full description of the weighting procedure applied to this dataset.

⁴ Percentages throughout may not total to 100 due to rounding.

⁵ This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of ± 1.9 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every adult male and female age 50 and older had been surveyed.

⁶ Differences in percentages are statistically significant at the .05 level, meaning 95 times out of 100, we would not have expected the result to have occurred by chance.

Definition of Terms

In this summary, a number of labels are used to describe people who have experienced funeral or burial planning and arranging. Funeral arrangers are those people who arranged the funeral of someone who died. Funeral pre-planners are those who pre-planned and paid for a future funeral for themselves or someone else. Burial planners or arrangers are those who have purchased burial plots or burial goods and services for someone who died or themselves in advance.

Summary of Findings

Experience with Funeral Arranging or Pre-Planning

During the past 18 months (January 1998 - June 1999), 20% of the respondents had some experience with funeral arranging and/or pre-planning (see Figure 1).¹ Ten percent arranged a funeral after a person died, while eight percent pre-planned and paid for a future funeral for themselves or someone else. Almost two percent had both arranged a funeral and pre-planned and paid for one in advance in the past 18 months.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, most of the descriptive analysis on funeral arranging and pre-planning focuses on the 531 respondents who have made one or both kinds of funeral arrangements.

Figure 1
Experience with Funeral Arranging or Pre-Planning
(n=2,624)

Question: During the past 18 months, that is, since January 1998, have you personally arranged for a funeral after someone died, or have you pre-planned and paid for a funeral in advance of need for someone, including possibly yourself?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

With the exception of age and marital status, there were no defining demographic differences among funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners. Older Americans (65+) (13%) were more likely to have experienced funeral pre-planning than those ages 50 to 54 (7%) and 55 to 64 (9%). Non-married respondents (23%) were more likely than married ones (18%) to have experienced arranging or pre-planning a funeral.

Advanced Planning For a Funeral After Someone Died

When we include respondents who experienced only arranging a funeral for someone who died as well as those who both arranged a funeral for someone who died and pre-planned a funeral in the last 18 months, twelve percent of all respondents reported having arranged a funeral after a person died. Of those (n=310), four in ten completed the arrangements for funerals where some of the details of the funeral had been arranged ahead of time. In those cases where some previous arrangements had been made (n=136), 67% said that the funeral had been paid for in advance. Those age 65 or older (77%) were more likely than respondents age 55 to 64 (56%) to say the arrangements made in advance had also been paid in advance.

Figure 2
Arranging a Funeral for Someone Who Died
Where Some Arrangements Had Been Made
(Base = 310)

*Base = 310. Based on respondents who made funeral arrangements after someone died.
Question: Had any of the details of this funeral been arranged ahead of time?
Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)*

In 1988, a third (34%) of respondents who arranged someone else's funeral (n=671) found that at least some of the details of this funeral had been arranged ahead of time.

Service or Pricing Changes

One tenth of respondents who experienced pre-planning their own or someone else's funeral or dealing with pre-arranged funerals for someone who died (n=312) encountered service or pricing changes in the advance arrangements. According to them, the funeral home where these advance arrangements had been made told them that changes were needed in the services or prices that had been arranged ahead of time. There were no statistically significant demographic differences among those experiencing changes and those who did not.

Figure 3
Experience with Service or Price Changes
in Advance Funeral Arrangements
(Base = 312)

Base = 312. Based on respondents who had experience with pre-planned funerals or pre-paid funeral arrangements.

Question: Did the funeral home where these arrangements had been made ever tell you that there needed to be changes in any of the services or prices that had been arranged ahead of time?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Embalming

For those who arranged a funeral after someone died (n=287),¹ two-thirds (66%) reported that the body was embalmed, which is down ten percent from 1988. A quarter of the funeral arrangers (25%) who reported embalming (n=188) were *not* asked for permission for the embalming before it was done, compared to a little over one third (37%) in 1988. There was no demographic variation in responses.

Figure 4 Was Permission Asked Before Embalming Was Done? (Base = 188)

Base = 188. Based on respondents who said body was embalmed.

Question: Were you or another family member or friend asked for permission for the embalming before it was done?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Contacted Funeral Homes

¹ This figure includes those whose only experience was in arranging a funeral after someone died (n=267) and those who had both pre-planned and made arrangements after a death, but whose most recent experience was arranging a funeral after someone died (n=20).

Of those who experienced funeral arranging and/or pre-planning (n=531), 12% did not contact any funeral homes, 69% contacted one funeral home, and 18% contacted

two or more funeral homes.¹ Demographic differences included:

- Funeral pre-planners (24%) were more likely to contact two or more funeral homes than funeral arrangers (14%).
- Women (74%) were more likely than men (62%) to contact one funeral home.
- Men (24%) were more likely than women (13%) to contact two or more funeral homes.

Offered Price Information Prior to Discussions

A third (34%) of the pre-planners and/or arrangers were *not* offered price information before talking about specific funeral goods and services with the funeral home they selected (see Figure 5). There were no significant demographic differences between those who were offered price information and those who were not.

Figure 5
Were You Offered Price Information BEFORE
You Started to Talk about Funeral Goods and Services?
(Base = 531)

Base = 531. Based on respondents who made one or both kinds of funeral arrangements.

¹ Although differences in the samples, especially that more pre-planners are represented in the 1999 sample than in the 1988 sample, inhibit one-to-one comparisons, this 1999 finding suggests a trend toward increased consumer shopping. In 1988, 11% of funeral pre-planners and arrangers contacted two or more funeral homes.

Question: Thinking about the funeral home you selected, were you offered price information BEFORE you started to talk about specific funeral goods and services?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Little has changed in the last ten years. Nearly the same percentage (36%) of respondents in 1988 did not receive price information prior to discussions.

Received Price List

Respondents who could recall whether they were given price information or not before talking about specific goods and services (n=491) were asked whether they were given a written price list. A third (32%) were *not* given a written price list. Respondents with a post-graduate education (45%) were more likely than those with a high school degree or less (28%) *not* to receive a price list.

Figure 6
Received a Written Price List
(Base = 491)

Base = 491. Based on respondents who were or were not offered price information.

Question: Were you given a written price list or not?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Viewed Caskets

A little more than half of the funeral arrangers and/or pre-planners (56%) viewed caskets on display for possible purchase or rental. Respondents age 50 to 54 (65%) were more likely than those 65 or older (51%) to view caskets. As might be

expected, funeral arrangers (63%) were more likely to view caskets than funeral pre-planners (48%).

Of the viewers (n=295), a third (36%) were *not* given written price lists for caskets before they began looking at them. Four in five viewers (80%) were given information by the funeral director about the protective features of caskets. One out of three (34%) were told that the protective features of the casket would help preserve the body indefinitely.

Figure 7
Told the Protective Features of a Casket
Would Preserve the Body Indefinitely
(Base =295)

Base = 295. Based on respondents who viewed caskets on display for possible purchase or rental.

Question: Did the funeral director tell you that the protective features of the casket would help preserve the body indefinitely?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Income, education, and marital status differences existed. Respondents who earn between \$15,000 and \$40,000, have high school diplomas or less education, and are not married were more likely to be told that the casket would preserve the body indefinitely.

Purchased or Rented Casket

Seven out of ten pre-planners and/or arrangers purchased or rented a casket. Funeral arrangers (68%) were more likely than funeral pre-planners (48%) to purchase a casket. Almost seven in ten (67%) of those age 50 to 54 purchased a casket, which is statistically different from those 65 and older (53%). The oldest respondents (34%) were more likely than the 50 to 64 year-olds (22%) to say they had *not* purchased or rented a casket.

Figure 8
Did You Purchase or Rent a Casket for a Funeral?
(Base = 531)

*Base = 531. Based on respondents who made one or both kinds of funeral arrangements.
Question: Did you purchase or rent a casket for the funeral?
Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)*

Offered Written Statement of Total Price

Before pre-planners and/or arrangers left the funeral home, one in seven (14%) did *not* receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services they selected. This was roughly the same in 1988 with 15% not receiving such a statement. Funeral pre-planners (19%) were more likely not to have received a

written statements than funeral arrangers (11%). There were no demographic variations.

If they had received a written statement (n=415), five percent could not see the individual price for each of the goods and services they selected because the total price was not broken down that way. Although slight, this is an increase from 1988 at which time three percent did not receive a price statement broken down.

Figure 9
Written Price Statement with Total Price Broken Down
for Each of the Goods and Services Selected

Received a Written Statement with Price
(Base = 531)

Total Price Broken Down
on Written Statement
(Base = 415)

Base = 531. Based on respondents who made one or both kinds of funeral arrangements.

Question: At the end of your meeting to arrange funeral services—BEFORE you left the funeral home—did you receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services you selected?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Base = 415. Based on respondents who received a written statement of the total price of goods and services.

Question: Was this total price also broken down so that you could see the individual price for EACH of the goods and services you selected?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Experience with Purchasing Burial Plots or Any Burial Goods and Services

Eight percent of the respondents purchased a burial plot for someone who died or for themselves in advance in the past 18 months. Those age 55 or older (8%) were more likely than those 50 to 54 (5%) to purchase a burial plot. Those in the earning less than \$15,000 (11%) were also more likely to make this purchase than those making \$50,000 or more (7%).

One tenth (10%) of all those surveyed purchased burial goods and services such as a headstone, memorial, or opening and closing of a grave in the past 18 months. Men (90%) were more likely than women (87%) to say they had *not* purchased burial goods and services.

Price Lists for Burial Plots

Of those respondents who purchased a burial plot (n=199), a third (36%) were *not* given a written or printed price list.

Figure 10 Received a Written or Printed Price List for Burial Plots (Base = 199)

Base = 199. Based on respondents who purchased a burial plot.

Question: Were you given a written or printed price list for the burial plots, or not?
Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Respondents who received a written or printed price list (n=109) thought that this list was very helpful (50%) or somewhat helpful (20%) when selecting the burial plots. Respondents age 55 to 64 (82%) were more likely than those 65 or older (59%) to think that a written or printed price list was helpful.

Price Lists for Burial Goods and Services

Purchasers of burial goods and services (n=256) were not always given written or printed price lists. More than one in five (22%) were *not* given a price list. Experiences with this were consistent across demographic characteristics.

Figure 11 Received a Written or Printed Price List for Burial Goods and Services (Base = 256)

Base = 256. Based on respondents who purchased burial goods and services.

Question: Were you given a written or printed price list for the goods and services, or not?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Price lists for burial goods and services, however, were very helpful (53%) or somewhat helpful (28%) to those who received them (n=188). Responses were consistent across demographics.

Grave Liner or Burial Vaults

The purchase of a burial plot or burial goods and services included a grave liner or burial vault for a little more than half (53%) of the respondents. There were no significant demographic differences.

Figure 12
Inclusion of a Grave Liner or Burial Vault with Purchase of Burial Plot or
Burial Goods and Services
(Base = 358)

Base = 358. Based on respondents who purchased a burial plot or burial goods and services.

Question: Did that include a grave liner or burial vault?

Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)

Twenty-nine percent of those purchasers of burial plots, goods, or services (n=338)¹ were told that the protective features of a grave liner or burial vault would help preserve the body indefinitely. Experience with this was consistent across demographic subgroups.

Figure 13
Told Protective Features of a Grave Liner or Burial Vault
Would Preserve Body Indefinitely
(Base = 338)

*Base = 338. Based on respondents who did or did not purchase a grave liner or burial vault.
Question: Did anyone you spoke with about purchasing burial goods or services tell you that the protective features of a grave liner or burial vault would help preserve the body indefinitely?
Source: AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (1999; n=2,624)*

¹ This figure includes those who gave either a yes or no response to the previous question on whether a grave liner or burial vault had been included in that purchase.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (weighted n=2,624)



More respondents were female (55%) than male (45%).



The average age was 65 years old.



One in five had household incomes of less than \$20,000. Almost a third (30%) earned \$20,000 to just less than \$50,000. Twenty-eight percent had incomes of \$50,000 or more.



Almost half (48%) had a high school diploma or less education. Almost one in three (29%) had completed college or post-graduate work. Nearly a quarter (24%) had some college beyond high school.



Almost four in ten (39%) were employed either full-time (32%) or part-time (7%). Over half (53%) were retired. Eight percent were not employed.



Sixty-two percent were married.



Almost nine out of ten (88%) were white, while six percent were black. One percent was Asian. Four percent were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Appendix A:
1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (weighted n = 2,624)
Annotated Questionnaire

**1999 AARP
FUNERAL AND BURIAL PLANNERS SURVEY¹**

ASK RESPONDENTS AGES 50 AND OLDER.

Next, I have some questions regarding funeral arrangements.

- A. During the past 18 months -- that is, since January 1998 -- have you personally arranged for a funeral after someone died, or have you pre-planned and paid for a funeral in advance of need for someone, including possibly yourself?

(IF YES AND UNCLEAR WHICH ONE, ASK:) Was that a funeral for someone who died, was it pre-planning, or both?

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>			
2041	78	No / neither	4	(SKIP TO BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS SECTION)
19	1	Don't know/can't remember	X	(SKIP TO BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS SECTION)
33	1	Refused	R	(SKIP TO BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS SECTION)
267	10	Yes, arranged funeral after person had died	1	(SKIP TO SENTENCE BEFORE 1a)
221	8	Yes, pre-planned and paid for future funeral		
		for self/other	2	(SKIP TO SENTENCE BEFORE 1a)
43	2	Both	3	→à ASK QU. B

- B. Which of the arrangements did you make more recently? **(READ LIST.)**

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
20	47	Funeral arrangements after someone had died 1
23	53	Pre-planned arrangements for the future 2

¹ The individual N and % may not total to the aggregated base number or 100% due to rounding.

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENT SECTION

I want to remind you that this information will be treated confidentially and used only to group your answers with others.

IF CODE 1 OR 3 TO QUESTION A, ASK QUESTION 1A; OTHERWISE, SKIP TO QU 3A.

1a. Had any of the details of this funeral been arranged ahead of time? **(INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: IF RESPONDENT SPEAKS OF MORE THAN ONE ARRANGEMENT, CLARIFY:)** Please refer to the funeral (arrangements/plans) you made most recently.

- if code 1 to either question A or question B, insert "arrangements"
- if code 2 to either question A or question B, insert "plans"

(BASE = 310)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
136	44	Yes	1
171	55	No	2
2	1	Don't know/can't remember	X
1	<1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO QU. 4a)

(SKIP TO QU. 4a)

(SKIP TO QU. 4a)

2a. (ASK IF YES TO Q.1a:) Were the funeral services that were arranged ahead of time already paid for, that is, paid for in advance of the funeral?

(BASE = 136)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
91	67	Yes	1
42	31	No	2
<1	<1	Don't know/can't remember	X

2 1 Refused R

**IF CODE 2 TO QUESTION A or "YES" TO QUESTION 2a, ASK QUESTION 3a;
OTHERWISE, SKIP TO QU 4a.**

3a.(ASK IF YES TO QU.2a OR IF CODE 2 [PRE-PLANNED] IN QU.A:) Did the funeral home where these arrangements had been made ever tell you that there needed to be changes in any of the services or prices that had been arranged ahead of time?

(BASE = 312)

N%

3210Yes1

26986No2

113Don't know/can't rememberX

----RefusedR

4a.(ASK ALL:) How many different funeral homes did you contact (to discuss arrangements for the funeral / when you did the funeral pre-planning)? **(ENTER EXACT AMOUNT. IF UNSURE, ENCOURAGE BEST GUESS.)**

(BASE = 531)

N%

63120

364691

97182 or more

41Don't know/can't rememberX

2<1RefusedR

5a.(ASK ALL:) Thinking about the funeral home you selected, were you offered price information BEFORE you started to talk about specific funeral goods and services?

(BASE = 531)

N%

31058Yes1

18134No2

357Don't know/can't rememberX (SKIP TO QU. 7a)

51RefusedR(SKIP TO QU. 7a)

6a. Were you given a written price list or not?

(BASE = 491)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
314	64	Yes (given a written price list)	1
159	32	No (not given one)	2
18	4	Don't know/can't remember	X
1	<1	Refused	R

7a. When making funeral arrangements, did you view any caskets on display for possible purchase or rental?

(BASE = 531)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
295	56	Yes	1
222	42	No	2
9	2	Don't know/can't remember	X
4	1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO QU.11a)
(SKIP TO QU.11a)
(SKIP TO QU.11a)

8a. Were you shown or given a written price list for caskets BEFORE you began looking at the ones on display?

(BASE = 295)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
170	58	Yes	1
107	36	No	2
--	--	Did not look at caskets (VOL.)	3
18	6	Don't know/can't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

9a. Did the funeral director give you any information about the protective features of caskets?

(BASE = 295)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
234	80	Yes	1
43	15	No	2
17	6	Don't know/can't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

10a. Did the funeral director tell you that the protective features of the casket would help preserve the body indefinitely?

(BASE = 295)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
100	34	Yes	1
152	52	No	2
43	15	Don't know/can't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

11a. Did you purchase or rent a casket for the funeral? (CLARIFY IF NECESSARY: Did you purchase or rent the casket?)

(BASE = 531)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
311	59	Yes, purchased	1
61	12	Yes, rented	2
148	28	No	3
6	1	Don't know/can't remember	X
4	1	Refused	R

12a. **(ASK ONLY IF PREVIOUS QUESTIONS REFER TO A FUNERAL ARRANGED AFTER SOMEONE HAD DIED:)**
Was the body embalmed?

(BASE = 287)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
188	66	Yes	1
86	30	No	2
9	3	Don't know/can't remember	X
4	1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO QU. 14a)

(SKIP TO QU. 14a)

(SKIP TO QU. 14a)

13a. Were you or another family member or friend asked for permission for the embalming before it was done?

(BASE = 188)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
120	64	Yes	1
46	25	No	2
22	12	Don't know/can't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

14a. At the end of your meeting to arrange funeral services -- BEFORE you left the funeral home -- did you receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services you selected?

(BASE = 531)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>			
415	78	Yes	1	
76	14	No	2	(SKIP TO BURIAL SECTION)
13	3	Did not select any goods/services (VOL.) ..	3	(SKIP TO BURIAL SECTION)
20	4	Don't know/can't remember	X	(SKIP TO BURIAL SECTION)
6	1	Refused	R	(SKIP TO BURIAL SECTION)

15a. Was this total price also broken down so that you could see the individual price for EACH of the goods and services you selected?

(BASE = 415)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
383	92	Yes	1
21	5	No	2
12	3	Don't know/can't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

BURIAL ARRANGEMENT SECTION

1b. During the past 18 months that is, since January, 1998, have you purchased a burial plot for someone who died or for yourself in advance of need?

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
199	8	Yes	1
2373	91	No	2
16	1	Don't know/can't remember	X
35	1	Refused	R

2b. During the past 18 months again, since January, 1998, have you purchased any burial goods and services such as a headstone, memorial, or opening and closing of the grave?

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
256	10	Yes	1
2309	88	No	2
23	1	Don't know/can't remember	X
35	1	Refused	R

IF "YES" TO EITHER QU. 1b OR 2b, ASK QU. 3b; OTHERWISE, TERMINATE.

3b. Did that include a grave liner or burial vault?

(BASE = 358)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
191	53	Yes	1
147	41	No	2
19	5	Don't know/can't remember	X
2	1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO QU. 5b)
(SKIP TO QU. 5b)

4b. Did anyone you spoke with about purchasing burial goods or services tell you that the protective features of a grave liner or burial vault would help preserve the body indefinitely?

(BASE = 338)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
98	29	Yes	1
202	60	No	2
36	11	Don't know/can't remember	X
1	<1	Refused	R

ASK QU. 5b AND 6b IF "YES TO QU 1B.
--

5b. Were you given a written or printed price list for the **BURIAL PLOTS**, or not?

(BASE = 199)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
109	55	Yes	1
73	36	No	2
17	9	Don't know/don't remember	X
1	<1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO QU 7b)
(SKIP TO QU 7b)
(SKIP TO QU 7b)

6b. How helpful was this price list when you were selecting the **BURIAL PLOTS**? Was it... **(READ LIST.)**

(BASE = 109)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
54	50	Very helpful	1
21	20	Somewhat helpful	2
12	11	A little helpful, or	3
5	4	Not at all helpful	4
17	16	Don't know/don't remember	X
--	--	Refused	R

ASK QU. 7b AND 8b IF "YES TO QU 2B.
--

7b. Were you given a written or printed price list for the **GOODS AND SERVICES**, or not?

(BASE = 256)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
188	74	Yes	1
56	22	No	2
11	4	Don't know/don't remember	X
1	1	Refused	R

(SKIP TO END)

(SKIP TO END)

(SKIP TO END)

8b. How helpful was this price list when you were selecting the **GOODS AND SERVICES**? Was it... **(READ LIST.)**

(BASE = 188)

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		
99	53	Very helpful	1
53	28	Somewhat helpful	2
16	9	A little helpful, or	3
10	5	Not at all helpful	4
9	5	Don't know/don't remember	X

2 1 Refused R

Demographics

Region

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
540	21	Northeast
636	24	Mid-West
959	37	South
489	19	West

Gender

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
1189	45	Male
1434	55	Female

Head of Household

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2477	94	Yes
147	6	No

Age

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
574	22	50-54
471	18	55-59
370	14	60-64
410	16	65-69
336	13	70-74
414	16	75+
50	2	Refused

Household Income

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
308	12	Under \$15k
202	8	\$15k to <\$20k
186	7	\$20k to <\$25k
173	7	\$25k to <\$30k
225	9	\$30k to <\$40k
188	7	\$40k to <\$50k
347	13	\$50k to <\$75k
209	8	\$75k to <\$100k
176	7	\$100k+
610	23	Refused

Education

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
329	13	Some high school or less
905	35	Completed high school
622	24	Some college
455	17	Completed college
305	12	Post grad work
8	<1	Refused

Employment Status

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
843	32	Full-time
176	7	Part-time
1387	53	Retired
216	8	Not employed

1	<1	Refused
---	----	---------

Marital Status

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
1613	62	Yes
1005	38	No
5	<1	Refused

Household Size

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
715	27	1
1333	51	2
323	12	3
241	9	4+
12	1	Refused

Child in the Household Under 6

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2551	97	None
55	2	1
8	<1	2
8	<1	3
2	<1	Refused

Child in the Household 6 to 12

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2507	96	None
75	3	1
34	1	2
4	<1	3
1	<1	5+

2	<1	Refused
---	----	---------

Child in the Household 13 to 17

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2470	94	None
118	5	1
28	1	2
3	<1	3
1	<1	5+
2	<1	Refused

Children in the Household

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
71	3	Under 6
114	4	6-12
151	6	13-17
2344	89	None

Home Owner

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2120	81	Yes
497	19	No
7	<1	Refused

Race

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
2316	88	White

165	6	Black
18	1	Asian
103	4	Some other race
21	1	Refused

Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish Origin

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
93	4	Yes
2522	96	No
9	<1	Refused

Primary Grocery Shopper

<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
1723	66	Yes
889	34	No
12	<1	Don't know

Appendix B:
1988 AARP Funeral Study (weighted n = 810)
Annotated Questionnaire

1988 AARP Funeral Study¹

Survey Methodology: Using two different sampling techniques, a proportionate stratified random digit-dial telephone sample and a pre-screened sample of households which contained a person meeting the age qualification of the survey, The Gallup Organization conducted this telephone survey to assess the experiences of adults 45 years of age or older who had pre-arranged their own funeral or arranged someone else's funeral from April 1987 through October 1988. A total of 675 interviews were completed between October 12, 1988 and November 1, 1988. The weighted number of respondents was 810.

1. How long ago did you make these arrangements? **(IF MORE THAN ONE FUNERAL ARRANGED, RECORD INFORMATION ABOUT THE MOST RECENT ARRANGEMENT) (DO NOT READ)**

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
49	6	Less than one month ago (October 1988)
107	13	One to three months ago (July to September 1988)
132	16	Four to six months ago (April to June 1988)
123	15	Seven to nine months ago (January 1988 to March 1988)
144	18	Ten to twelve months ago (October to December 1987)
97	12	Thirteen to fifteen months ago (July to September 1987)
121	15	Sixteen to eighteen months ago (April to June 1987)
36	5	CAN'T REMEMBER

2. When you made these arrangements, were you planning things in advance for your own funeral, or were you making arrangements for someone else's funeral?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
139	17	Advance arrangements for own funeral - SKIP TO Q.9
668	83	Planning someone else's funeral
3	*1	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

¹ The individual N and % may not total to the aggregated base number or 100% due to rounding.

3. Did you have complete responsibility for making the funeral arrangements, did you have most of the responsibility, did you share the responsibility equally with another person, or did you help someone else who was responsible for making the funeral arrangements?

Base = 671. Based on respondents who were planning someone else's funeral.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
275	41	Complete responsibility
108	16	Most of the responsibility
238	35	Shares equally in responsibility
51	8	Helped someone else who was responsible
-	-	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

4. Had any of the details of this funeral been arranged ahead of time?

Base = 671. Based on respondents who were planning someone else's funeral.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
229	34	Yes
438	65	No -- SKIP TO Q.10
3	1	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

5. Was the funeral home where the services would be conducted already selected?

Base = 229. Based on respondents who were arranging someone else's funeral and where some details on the funeral were made ahead of time.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
203	88	Yes
27	12	No -- SKIP TO Q.10
-	-	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

6. Were the services that were arranged ahead of time already paid for?

Base = 203. Based on respondents who were arranging someone else's funeral and where the funeral home had been selected ahead of time.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
101	50	Yes
99	49	No
2	1	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

7. At the time that you contacted the funeral home where these arrangements had been made, were you told that there needed to be changes in any of the services or prices that had been arranged ahead of time?

Base = 203. Based on respondents who were arranging someone else's funeral and where the funeral home had been selected ahead of time.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
18	9	Yes
178	88	No -- SKIP TO Q.12
7	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

8. Why were these changes necessary? (**DO NOT READ. CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.**)

Base = 18. Based on respondents planning someone else's funeral who were told of changes in services or prices arranged ahead of time.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
11	62	Price changes	
2	13	Services changes/some services no longer offered	
-	-	Deceased had moved, wanted arranged services, transferred to another funeral home	-- SKIP TO Q.12
5	25	Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)	
-	-	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER	

9. Did you pay all of the cost, part of the cost or none of the cost for the services you arranged?

Base = 139. Based on respondents who made advance arrangements for their own funeral.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
57	41	All
40	29	Part
32	23	None
10	7	DON'T KNOW/REFUSED

10. How many different funeral homes did you contact?

Base = 607. Based on respondents who made advance arrangements for their own funeral or planned some else's funeral where no details had been made ahead of time.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
514	85	One
68	11	Two or more -
24	4	CAN'T REMEMBER

SKIP TO Q.12

11. Did you ever consider contacting more than one funeral home before you selected the one you chose?

Base = 539. Based on respondents who made advance arrangements for their own funeral or someone else's where no details had been arranged ahead of time and who contacted one funeral home.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
22	4	93
501	93	No
15	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

12. Some people find it helpful when funeral directors give them information about the cost of funeral services when they first begin making arrangements. Others are offended that funeral directors bring up the subject of costs during their time of grieving. Which of these views comes closer to your own?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
670	83	Cost information is helpful
39	5	Discussing costs is offensive
70	9	DOES NOT MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE - VOLUNTEERED
30	4	DON'T KNOW

13. Thinking about the funeral home which you selected, were you offered price information before you started to talk about specific funeral services?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
457	57	Yes
295	36	No
57	7	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

14. Were you given a written price list or not?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
514	64	Yes
251	31	No
44	6	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

-- SKIP TO Q.17

15. Did you take the price list or not?

Base = 514. Based on respondents who were given a written price list.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
421	82	Yes

78	15	No
15	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

16. Did you understand all of the terms on the price list used to describe the funeral services, or were there some terms you did not understand?

Base = 514. Based on respondents who were given a written price list.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
473	92	Understood all of the terms
37	7	Did not understand some terms
4	1	CAN'T REMEMBER

17. Did you select a casket when making funeral arrangements?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
630	78	Yes
177	22	No
2	*	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

-- SKIP TO Q.23

18. Were you shown or given a written price list for caskets before you began looking at the ones on display?

Base = 630. Based on respondents who selected a casket when making funeral arrangements.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
315	50	Yes
282	45	No
34	5	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

-- SKIP TO Q.20

19. How helpful was this price list when you were selecting a casket? Was it very helpful, somewhat helpful, a little helpful, or not helpful at all?

Base = 315. Based on respondents who selected a casket and who were given a written price list for caskets.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
253	80	Very helpful
35	11	Somewhat helpful
12	4	A little helpful
11	3	Not helpful at all
3	1	DON'T KNOW

20. Did the funeral director give you any information about the protective features of caskets?

Base = 630. Based on respondents who selected a casket when making funeral arrangements.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
471	75	Yes
108	17	No
51	8	DON'T KNOW

-- SKIP TO Q.23

21. How helpful was this information about protective features when you were selecting a casket? Was it very helpful, somewhat helpful, a little helpful, or not at all helpful?

Base = 471. Based on respondents who selected a casket and who were given information about the protective features of caskets.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
317	67	Very helpful
75	16	Somewhat helpful
25	5	A little helpful
36	8	Not helpful at all
18	4	DON'T KNOW

22. Did the funeral director tell you that the protective features of the casket would help preserve the body indefinitely?

Base = 471. Based on respondents who selected a casket and who were given information about the protective features of caskets.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
143	30	Yes
243	52	No
86	18	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

23. Did you decide to buy a grave liner or a burial vault from the funeral home?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
436	54	Yes
347	43	No
27	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

SKIP TO Q.28

24. Were you shown or given a written price list for these products?

Base = 436. Based on respondents who bought a grave liner or burial vault.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
349	80	Yes
74	17	No
14	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

SKIP TO Q. 26

25. How helpful was this price list when you were selecting a grave liner or burial vault? Was it very helpful, somewhat helpful, a little helpful, or not helpful at all?

Base = 349. Based on respondents who bought a grave liner or vault and who were given a written price list.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
258	74	Very helpful
48	14	Somewhat helpful
15	4	A little helpful

16	5	Not helpful at all
11	3	DON'T KNOW

26. Did the funeral director give you any information about the protective features of grave liners or burial vaults?

Base = 436. Based on respondents who bought a grave liner or burial vault.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
319	73	Yes	
85	19	No	SKIP TO Q. 28
32	7	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER	

27. Did the funeral director tell you that the protective features of a grave liner or burial vault would help preserve the body indefinitely?

Base = 319. Based on respondents who bought a grave liner or burial vault and who were given information about the protective features of grave liners or burial vaults.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
106	33	Yes
168	53	No
46	14	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

29. Was the body embalmed?

Base = 671. Based on respondents who were planning someone else's funeral.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
514	77	Yes	
116	17	No	SKIP TO Q. 31
41	6	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER	

30. Were you or another member or friend asked for permission for the embalming before it was done?

Base = 514. Based on respondents who planned someone else's funeral and who had the body embalmed.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
240	47	Yes
187	37	No
86	17	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

ASK ALL RESPONDENTS:

31. At the end of your meeting, before you left the funeral home, did you receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services you selected?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>		
667	82	Yes	
118	15	No	SKIP TO Q. 33
24	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER	

32. Was this total price also broken down so that you could see the individual price for each service you selected?

Base = 667. Based on respondents who received a written statement of the total price.

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
628	94	Yes
17	3	No
23	3	DON'T KNOW/CAN'T REMEMBER

And now, just a few background questions for statistical purposes only . . .

33. Are there any other adults between the ages of 18 and 44 living in this household?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
292	36	Yes
516	64	No
2	*	DON'T KNOW

34. What was the last class or grade you COMPLETED in school?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
4	1	None - or grades 1-4
20	3	Grades 5, 6, 7
30	4	Grade 8
134	17	High school incomplete (grades 9-12)
245	30	High school graduate, grade 12
27	3	Technical, trade, or business school
138	17	College, University, incomplete
200	25	College, University, graduate
11	1	DON'T KNOW

35. What is your age? (RECORD ACTUAL AGE)

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
132	16	Less than 50
285	35	50-59
242	30	60-69
143	18	70 or over
7	1	DON'T KNOW/UNDESIGNED

36. Is your annual household income before taxes? (READ)

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
96	12	Under 10,000 (under \$192 per week)
77	10	\$10,000 to \$14,999 (\$192 to \$288 per week)
67	8	\$15,000 to \$19,999 (\$289 to \$384 per week)
81	10	\$20,000 to \$24,999 (\$385 to \$480 per week)
67	8	\$25,000 to \$29,999 (\$481 to \$576 per week)
58	7	\$30,000 to \$34,999 (\$577 to \$673 per week)
49	6	\$35,000 to \$39,999 (\$674 to \$769 per week)
68	9	\$40,000 to \$49,999 (\$770 to \$961 per week)
124	15	\$50,000 and over
121	15	NO ANSWER/DON'T KNOW

37. What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian-American or some other race?

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
748	92	White
46	6	Black
3	*	Asian-American
11	1	OTHER
1	*	DON'T KNOW

40. RECORD SEX

<u>n</u>	<u>%</u>	
348	43	Male
461	57	Female

**Appendix C:
Comparative Table**

Side-by-Side Comparison of Survey Questions¹ from the 1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey² and 1988 AARP Funeral Study³

1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (n=2,624)			1988 AARP Funeral Study (n=810)		
1a. Had any of the details of this funeral been arranged ahead of time? (Base = 310 made funeral arrangements after person died)			Q4. Had any of the details of this funeral been arranged ahead of time? (Base = 671 made arrangements for someone else's funeral)		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	
Yes	136	44	34	229	Yes
No	171	55	65	438	No
Don't know/Refused	3	1	1	3	Don't know
5a. Thinking about the funeral home you selected, were you offered price information before you started to talk about specific funeral goods and services? (Base = 531 arranged funeral for someone else, pre-planned own or someone else's funeral, or both)			Q13. Thinking about the funeral home which you selected, were you offered price information before you started to talk about specific funeral services? (n=810 arranged funeral for someone else or pre-planned own funeral)		
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	
Yes	310	58	57	457	Yes
No	181	34	36	295	No
Don't know/Refused	40	8	7	57	Don't know

¹ Survey items are comparable only if they are similarly worded and the base populations are similar.

² An omnibus telephone survey using random digit-dial sampling. Market Facts, Inc. completed 2,591 interviews from June 18, 1999 to July 11, 1999 with respondents age 50 and older of whom 507 had personally planned for a funeral after someone died, had pre-planned and paid for a funeral in advance for someone, including possibly themselves, or both. After weighting, the total number of respondents is 2,624 with 20% having made one or both kinds of funeral arrangements (n=531).

³ Using two different sampling techniques, a proportionate stratified random digit-dial telephone sample and a pre-screened sample of households which contained a person meeting the age qualification of the survey, The Gallup Organization conducted this telephone survey to assess the experiences of adults 45 years of age or older who had pre-arranged their own funeral or arranged someone else's funeral from April 1987 through October 1988. A total of 675 interviews were completed between October 12, 1988 and November 1, 1988. The weighted number of respondents was 810.

1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey (n=2,624)				1988 AARP Funeral Study (n=810)			
12a Was the body embalmed? (Base = 287 most recently or only made funeral arrangements after person died)				Q29. Was the body embalmed? (Base = 671 made arrangements for someone else's funeral)			
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>		
Yes	188	66		77	514	Yes	
No	86	30		17	116	No	
Don't know/Refused	13	4		6	41	Don't know	
13a. Were you or another family member or friend asked for permission for the embalming before it was done? (Base = 188 most recently or only made funeral arrangements after person died and body embalmed)				Q30. Were you or another family member or friend asked for permission for the embalming before it was done? (Base = 514 made arrangements for someone else's funeral and body embalmed)			
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>		<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>		
Yes	120	64		47	240	Yes	
No	46	25		37	187	No	
Don't know	22	12		17	86	Don't know	

1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners
Survey
(n=2,624)

14a. At the end of your meeting to arrange funeral services—before you left the funeral home—did you receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services you selected?
(Base = 531 arranged funeral for someone else, pre-planned own or someone else's funeral, or both)

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	415	78
No	76	14
Did not select any	13	3
Don't know/Refused	26	5

15a. Was this total price also broken down so that you could see the individual price for each of the goods and services selected? (Base = 415 arranged funeral for someone else, pre-planned own or someone else's funeral, or both and received written statement)

	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	383	92
No	21	5
Don't know	12	3

1988 AARP Funeral Study
(n=810)

Q31. At the end of your meeting to arrange funeral services—before you left the funeral home—did you receive a written statement of the total price for all the goods and services you selected?
(n = 810 arranged funeral for someone else or pre-planned own funeral)

<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	
82	667	Yes
15	118	No
--	--	--
3	24	Don't know

Q32. Was this total price also broken down so that you could see the individual price for each of the goods and services selected? (Base = 667 arranged funeral for someone else or pre-planned own funeral and received written statement)

<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	
94	628	Yes
3	17	No
3	23	Don't know

Appendix D: Methodology

Methodology

1999 AARP Funeral and Burial Planners Survey

Using TeleNation, Market Facts, Inc. conducted an omnibus telephone survey that uses a single-stage, random digit-dial (RDD) sample technique. It is completed three times each week. Market Facts, Inc. completed 2,591 interviews for AARP from June 18, 1999 through July 11, 1999. TeleNation interviews consist of client-specific questions and a shared set of standard demographic questions. AARP drafted its own survey items to be included in the TeleNation survey.

Typically, each TeleNation survey or wave consists of a minimum of 1,000 interviews with adults all 18 or older-- 500 male and 500 female. However, for AARP, TeleNation screened respondents by age. Only those age 50 or older could respond to AARP's funeral and burial planning questions. It took approximately eight waves of TeleNation to arrive at samples of funeral and burial planners or arrangers large enough for representative data analysis.

Out of 2,591 respondents age 50 and older, 507 had personally planned for a funeral after someone died, had pre-planned and paid for a funeral in advance of need for someone, including possibly themselves, or both. The survey asked these respondents about:

- making and paying for arrangements ahead of time
- pricing changes for advanced arrangements
- contacting different funeral homes
- sharing pricing information before discussing arrangements
- viewing caskets and discussing their protective features
- purchasing or renting a casket
- embalming
- receiving written price lists and statements.

The survey also asked all respondents about purchasing burial plots and burial goods and services. A total of 358 respondents purchased burial plots or burial goods and services. For this group, the survey included questions on:

- grave liners or burial vaults
- printed price lists for burial plots and burial goods or services
- the usefulness of such price lists.

The survey also asked demographic questions. We examined demographic differences by age, gender, education, income, and marital status.¹ However, in most cases the respondent subsets are too small for

¹ Differences in percentages are statistically significant at the .05 level, meaning 95 times out of 100, we would not have expected the result to have occurred by chance.

such analysis or the minimum difference in percentage points required for statistical significance is too great.

TeleNation's standard data are weighted. The data are weighted on an individual multi-dimensional basis to give appropriate representation of the interaction between various demographic factors. The multi-dimensional array covers gender, within age, within household income within the four National Census Regions, resulting in 144 different cells. TeleNation uses the current Population Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau to determine the weighting targets for each of these 144 cells. For this study, Market Facts, Inc. weighted each survey wave culminating in one weighted data set. The total weighted number of respondents is 2,624. The weighted number of funeral arrangers and/or planners is 531, and the weighted number of burial arrangers is 358.

Data analysis and reporting are based on the 2,624 respondents. Based on this sample size, the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 1.9 percent. This means that in 95 out of 100 samples of this size, the results obtained in the sample would fall in a range of ± 1.9 percentage points of what would have been obtained if every adult male and female age 50 and older had been surveyed. For the sub-sample of funeral arrangers and/or planners (n=531), the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 4.3 percent. For the sub-sample of burial arrangers (n=358), the survey has a sampling error of plus or minus 5.3 percent.

⁰ The “*” means less than 1%.